

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/ESWALKER

APPROVED BY: NEA:EDWARD S WALKER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 041612

FOL REPEAT OF STATE 41612 TO NEW DELHI ISLAMABAD FEB 24

QTE:

UNCLAS STATE 041612

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KAUL'S FEBRUARY 24 STATEMENT ON
LIFTING OF ARMS EMBARGO

AT FEBRUARY 24 PRESS CONFERENCE

INDIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES T.N. KAUL MADE
THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS
EMBARGO.

1. BEGIN QUOTE: WE HAVE NOTED WITH DEEP REGRET AND
DISAPPOINTMENT THE DECISION TO LIFT THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO
ANNOUNCED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT TODAY AND HAVE ALREADY
LODGED A STRONG PROTEST AGAINST IT. WE DO NOT ACCEPT OR
AGREE THAT THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO WILL NOT LEAD
TO AN ARMS RACE OR HINDER THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION
UNDER THE SIMLA AGREEMENT; OUR OPINION IS BASED ON OUR
EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST TWO DECADES WHEN THREE BLOODY
CONFLICTS TOOK PLACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT IN WHICH
AMERICAN ARMS WERE USED AGAINST INDIA, IN SPITE OF
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AMERICAN ASSURANCES TO THE CONTRARY.

2. OUR DIFFERENCES WITH PAKISTAN ARE TEMPORARY AND CAN AND WILL BE SOLVED BILATERALLY AND PEACEFULLY IF THERE IS NO OUTSIDE INTERVENTION. THIS WAS THE SOLEMN AGREEMENT SIGNED IN SIMLA AND WE ARE DETERMINED TO CARRY THE SIMLA

PROCESS FORWARD, IN SPITE OF THE IMPEDIMENTS THAT MAY BE PLACED IN ITS WAY BY THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO.

3. THE TROUBLE IN THE PAST HAS BEEN THAT OUTSIDE POWERS, ESPECIALLY SOME OF THE GREAT POWERS AND, IN PARTICULAR USA, HAVE TAKEN A PARTISAN ATTITUDE ON THE PROBLEMS OF THE SUBCONTINENT AND THUS ENCOURAGED TENSION AND CONFLICT, EVEN PERHAPS WITHOUT INTENDING TO DO SO. THE ARMS EMBARGO IMPOSED IN 1965 WAS A WISE DECISION IN THE LIGHT OF PAST EXPERIENCE. THE ONE TIME EXCEPTION IN 1970 IS NEITHER ONE TIME NOR AN EXCEPTION ANY MORE. THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO FURTHER REDUCES THE CREDIBILITY OF US ASSURANCES WHICH HAVE PROVED INOPERATIVE IN THE PAST. IT SHOWS THAT THE US ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS THE SUB-CONTINENT IS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF POWER, BALANCE OF POWER, OF CREATING INFLUENCE THROUGH SUPPLY OF ARMS - A POLICY THAT HAS FAILED IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AND SOME OTHER ADJOINING AREAS.

4. WE HOPE THAT ANY ATTEMPTS TO INVOLVE THE SUB-CONTINENT IN GREAT POWER MILITARY ALLIANCES AND RIVALRIES WILL NOT BE ENCOURAGED. WE ARE NON-ALIGNED AND HOPE TO CREATE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AN AREA OF PEACE, FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION ON THE BASIS OF THE SOVEREIGN EQUALITY OF NATIONS INSTEAD OF AN AREA OF TENSION AND CONFLICT AS IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST.

5. THERE IS NO CONFLICT OF BASIC INTERESTS BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN. OUR COMMON ENEMIES ARE POVERTY, SHORTAGE OF FOOD, ILLITERACY, DISEASE, ETC. WHAT WE BOTH NEED IS TO MODERNISE OUR AGRICULTURE, HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES ETC. AND NOT AN ARMS RACE WHICH NEITHER OF US CAN AFFORD.

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6. INDIA IS AS MUCH INTERESTED, IF NOT MORE THAN ANY OTHER POWER, IN THE INTEGRITY, STABILITY, SECURITY AND PROGRESS OF A FRIENDLY PAKISTAN. THAT IS WHY INDIA RETURNED OVER 5000 SQ. MILES OF PAKISTANI TERRITORY UNDER THE SIMLA AGREEMENT AND OVER 90,000 PRISONERS OF WAR UNDER THE DELHI AGREEMENT.

7. IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE FELT IT NECESSARY TO CHANGE ITS POLICY OF AN ARMS EMBARGO WHICH HAD HELPED RELAX TENSION AND THE PROCESS OF NORMALISATION. IT IS ALL THE MORE REGRETTABLE BECAUSE OF THE ADVERSE EFFECT IT WILL HAVE ON INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. INDIA ATTACHES IMPORTANCE TO ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH USA BUT FRIENDSHIP IS A TWO-WAY STREET. END QUOTE. KISSINGER UNQTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, POLICIES, EMBARGOES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE041612
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/ESWALKER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750066-0256
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750214/aaaaampq.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 MAY 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR KAUL'S FEBRUARY 24 STATEMENT ON LIFTING OF ARMS EMBARGO
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, (KAUL, T N)
To: BANGKOK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006